

PLINY WRITES TO HIS FRIENDS

GRAMMAR ASSUMED:

Perfect & Pluperfect Subjunctive;
Indirect Questions;
Sequence of Tenses

WHEELLOCK: CHAPTER 30

Pliny's letters are an invaluable source of information about Roman high society in the late first century A.D.

Suscenseō; nesciō an dēbeam, sed suscenseō. Scīs¹ quam inīquus interdum, quā² impotēns saepe, quā³ querulior semper sit amor. Nesciō an haec causa sit iūsta; magna tamen est, et ego graviter suscenseō, quod fuērunt ā tē tam
5 diū litterae nūllae. Exorāre mē pōtes⁴ ūnō modō, sī nunc saltem plūrimās et longissimās litterās mīseris. Haec mihi sōla excūsātiō vēra, cēterae falsae vidēbuntur. Nōn sum auditūrus "nōn eram in urbe²" vel "occupātor eram"; nec
10 dī sinant ut audiam "infīrior." Cōgitā quantam cūram tibi habeam. Scīre cupiō quid faciās et fēcērīs. Nunc plūrimās et longissimās litterās mitte! Valē!

—adapted from Pliny, *Epistles* 2.2

Diū nōn librum in manūs, nōn stilum sūmpsī; diū nesciō quid sit ōtium, quid quiēs, quid dēnique illud iners, iūcundum tamen nihil agere, nihil esse: tam multa mē negōtia
15 amīcōrum nec Rōmā sēcēdere nec litterīs studēre patiuntur. Nūlla enim studia tantī sunt, ut amīctiae officium neglēgātur. Valē!

—adapted from Pliny, *Epistles* 8.9

¹ "how" ² translate as "rather ——" ³ from 'possum' ⁴ near future; "going to —"

VOCABULARY:

suscenseō, -ēre, -censuī, -census: to be angry

an: whether (introducing an indirect question)

inīquus, -a, -um: unfair, unjust

interdum (adverb): at times, sometimes

impotēns, -entis: out of control, immoderate

querulior: rather prone to complain (about trifles)

causa: supply īrae (genitive)

iūstus, -a, -um: fair, just

graviter (adverb): deeply, severely

exorō (1): to win over (by begging), appease

saltem (adverb): at least (modifying nunc)

mīseris: from mittō

excūsātiō, -ōnis, f.: way of making amends, means of apologizing

vel (conjunction): or

occupātus, -a, -um: occupied, busy

nec ... sinant: subjunctive expressing a wish ("may they not allow, may they forbid")

sinō, -ere, sīvī, situs: to allow (+ ut clause as direct object, "that...")

infīrmus, -a, -um: weak, ill

stilus, -ī, m.: stylus, instrument for writing on wax tablets

sūmō, -ere, sūmpsī, sūmptus: to take up, lay hold of

quiēs, -ētis, f.: rest, repose

illud: modifies each infinitive phrase: "that ... (state of) doing nothing, that ... (state of) being nothing"

iners, -ertis: inactive, idle

negōtium, -iī, n.: business, affair

Rōmā: ablative of place from which

sēcēdō, -ere, -cessī, -cessus: to withdraw, retire

studeō, -ēre, studuī: to study, pursue (+ dative)

patior, patī, passus sum: to allow, permit (translate actively)

tantī: genitive of value ("of so much worth")